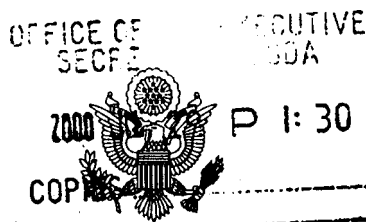


JOEL
COLORADO
FIFTH DISTRICT

HEFLEY , .



COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES
SMALL BUSINESS
RESOURCES

Congress of the United States'
House of Representatives

June 26, 2000

The Honorable Dan Glickman
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue
Washington, DC. 20205

35-4156456
FSIS

Dear Secretary Glickman:

I am **writing** to share with you the concerns of the Colorado Director of Health and myself regarding the draft strategic plan for food safety recently issued by the President's Council on Food Safety.

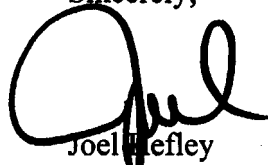
It is our fear that this federal plan will not take into account the national system of food safety inspection programs that are currently being conducted by state and local health agencies. Here are some of the specific concerns my constituents have outlined to me:

- "The strategic plan refers to the 'National Food Safety System' but does not define the term, nor what role the state and local partners will play in this system. Because the plan is a national plan, the importance of participation by the state and local food safety programs, in addition to federal food safety programs, needs to be more clearly articulated."
- "Many states, including Colorado, have participated in the six National Food Safety System work groups which have been composed of representatives of federal, state, and local food agencies and have been actively working under the direction of a national steering committee. Each group has submitted concrete recommendations and instituted several important pilot projects which should be included and described in the strategic plan, but are not."
- "It is essential that the strategic plan address the work being done in the current food safety system by all federal, state and local agencies to assist the President's Council on Food Safety in identifying the existing gaps and overlaps. The strategic plan should include a means of accurately evaluating the food safety work currently underway at each level of government in the United States."

- The section of the plan that addresses 'Food Safety Regulation Today' mentions states only in an ancillary fashion. The council needs to be aware that most states operate under statutes that contain language that, in most instances, is identical to the federal food safety statutes. Through the authority provided in these statutes, state and local agencies inspect the majority of all food processors, manufacturers, distributors, and retail outlets in the United States."

While there must be federal oversight to create uniformity and consistency in this new system, I feel this plan will not succeed without the cooperation and resources of the state and local levels. I hope that you will take these concerns into account before you finalize the Food Safety Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joel Hefley', written over the printed name.

Joel Hefley
Member of Congress

JH:am